

# AIRTEL COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

January 9, 1998

The Honorable William E. Kennard  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20554

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

Dear Chairman Kennard,

I am writing to you on behalf of small, minority-owned businesses like my own. For almost five years now, the federal government has been promising to lower market-entry barriers so that small businesses will have an opportunity to compete with incumbent service providers. The government also has worked hard to create incentives, such as tax certificates and installment payments to finance new PCS licenses, so that women and minorities will have a better chance to own and operate TV, radio, and telephone companies. I know you are a strong supportive of expanding business opportunities for minorities, and I ask you to continue that charge.

By way of background, my company, Airtel Communications, Inc. ("Airtel"), has faced many of hurdles that confront start-up businesses. Airtel has faced many hurdles because of its' inability to compete with larger firms. However, the FCC fostered competition in the wireless industry creating the Entrepreneur's Block. Airtel and the C Block operators are similar in their infrastructure, philosophy and financial resources. Airtel and its' clients corporate missions are to provide service to their customers cost effectively, efficiently and innovatively. Because of the C-block operator's receptiveness to contracting small businesses, the C-block operators have provided Airtel with a tremendous opportunity to flourish in what was once a very small circle of site development firms. However, my clients are experiencing great difficulty obtaining financing for their build-outs. Several of my clients started their network build-outs only to stop mid-stream due to their inability to access capital. These difficulties have had a direct negative impact on Airtel's operations and its' employees.

Part of your focus as the new FCC Chairman has been on the C-block, a band of spectrum reserved exclusively for small businesses and entrepreneurs. I would like you and your fellow Commissioners to recognize the C-block for what it is: the last stop for competition. Competition that translates into consumer choice and competitive pricing. Competition that results in job opportunities, as start-up companies like Airtel look to expand our own customer bases.

The C-block is comprised of highly qualified individuals capable of constructing PCS networks and providing affordable services to the mass market. Airtel supports petitions for reconsideration in WT docket 97-82 that seek to modify the restructuring options offered by the last Commission. Specifically, Airtel would like to encourage you and the other Commission to credit PCS licensees that have already invested in network deployment, as these facilities will speed service to the public. In addition, no financial penalties should be levied against the licensees that plan to remain in the PCS business. They have already suffered irreparable

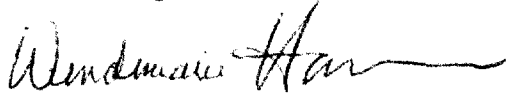
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financial harm in the wake of successive spectrum auctions. Many have had to layoff key personnel, sell network assets, and/or revise their business strategies just to stay afloat.

I urge you to make these minor modifications, so that small businesses, particularly women, and minority-owned firms, can get on with the build-out of our national wireless infrastructure. Only this will lead to true competition in the communications marketplace. Thank you for your time and consideration.

With best regards,



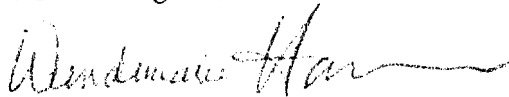
Wendimarie Haven  
President  
Airtel Communications, Inc.

Cc: The Honorable Susan Ness  
The Honorable Michael Powell  
The Honorable Harold Furchtgott-Roth  
The Honorable Gloria Tristani

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